

REMARKS

Claims 1-32 are pending in the present Application. Claim 1 has been amended, leaving claims 1-32 for consideration upon entry of the present Amendment. No new matter has been introduced by these amendments. Reconsideration and allowance of the claims are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

I. Claim 17 stands rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Yoshizawa et al. (US Patent No. 6,733,113).

Yoshizawa does not disclose the presence of an ink supply tube, neither does it disclose the average surface roughness of an inner surface of the tube as claimed in claim 17. Therefore, the anticipation rejection is respectfully traversed.

Also, according to MPEP 706.02(k)(E) and 706.02(l)(2) II, the present application and Yoshizawa, US 6,733,113 were at the time the invention of the present application was made; both owned by Konica Corporation of Japan (Note: Konica and Minolta merged into Konica Minolta Holdings Inc. in about the year 2003), i.e., "common ownership." Therefore, Yoshizawa, US 6,733,113 is not available as a reference under 35 USC 102(e) or 35 USC 103(a) or 103(c). (Note: there are also two inventors in common; Mr. Yoshizawa and Mr. Kawashima).

Therefore, the anticipation rejection is respectfully traversed and Yoshizawa, US 6,733,113 must not be used for this reason as well.

Claims 18-32 depend from claim 17 and therefore also allowable.

II. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Owatari (US Patent No. 4,489,334) in view of Yoshizawa et al. (US Patent No. 6,733,113) and Takeda et al. (US Patent No. 5,944,917).

Claim 1 has been amended. Claim 1 at least differs from Yoshizawa in that the "ink supply tube" is made of "plastic material" (see page 12, line 7 for support in the present

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specification, no new matter is added). In contrast, according to the disclosure of Takeda, the "ink supply tube" is made of metal material (stainless steel), not "plastic material."

Therefore, due to fact that Yoshizawa, US 6,733,113 is not available as a reference under 35 USC 102(e) or 35 USC 103(a) or 103(c) according to MPEP 706.02(l)(2) and 706.02(l)(2) II, and also due to the "plastic material" limitation of claim 7, the obviousness rejection is respectfully traversed (see also MPEP 706.02(j)).

Claims 2-16 depend from claim 17 and therefore also allowable.

III. Conclusion.

It is believed that the foregoing amendments and remarks fully comply with the Office Action and that the claims herein should now be allowable. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

If there are any additional charges with respect to this Amendment or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 06-1130.

Respectfully submitted,



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